



European  
University  
Institute

DEPARTMENT  
OF POLITICAL  
AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCES



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## **Bringing the Government Back In: the State and Policy-Making in Times of Uncertainty**

**3<sup>rd</sup> term bottom-up workshop, 2018/2019**

**Sala del Capitolo, 6-7 June, 2019**

**Sponsoring professor & instructor:** Anton Hemerijck

**Guest participants:**

- Fabrizio Barca – Minister for Territorial Cohesion (2011-2013), Italy; Founder of Inequality and Diversity Forum
- Ab Klink – Professor at VU Amsterdam, Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport (2007-2010), the Netherlands
- Nick Pearce – Professor of Public Policy at University of Bath, Chief Adviser to Prime Minister Gordon Brown (2008-2010), UK

**Presentation:**

- Johannes Karremans - Lise Meitner Fellow, University of Salzburg

**Organizing researcher:** Maciej Sobocinski

**Organizational support:** Maureen Lechleitner

### **Course description**

In recent decades, the scholarly interest in government as the core state actor in policy-making has been waning. From one angle, governance theories have suggested a departure from traditional state-centred hierarchical styles of governing towards a large-scale integration of vertical and horizontal actors in the policy process. At the same time, the surge of studies focusing on the role of electoral competition and public opinion in shaping policy outputs has shifted emphasis from government and state institutions to the electorate as the primary driver of policy change.

Our workshop's proposition is that the state still matters and that political agency of governments remains decisive in developing adaptive responses to uncertainties brought about by modern *megatrends*, such as 'permanent austerity', globalization, digitalization, climate change and population ageing. Taking off from Peter Mair's distinction between 'responsible' and 'responsive' government, the workshop aims to discuss the mechanisms that determine government actors' ability to address the dilemma of political decision-making in the context of blurred partisan cleavages, the rise of populism, and an intensified struggle between competing knowledge claims.

The workshop's structure is twofold. On the first day, participants will discuss selected readings on politics of public policy and government, aiming to establish links between extant theories and empirical cases of contemporary policy-making. On the second day, researchers will engage in a semi-structured debate with invited high-level guests who are both former and active policy-makers at the ministerial level, with profound experience in a number of national governments across EU member states. The purpose of this exercise is to create a platform for an unconstrained exchange between theoretically-informed researchers and reflexive policy-makers to refine our collective understanding of the politics behind contemporary public policy.

## **Requirements**

Participants who want to obtain 10 credits are required to attend all sessions and to complete the required readings. In addition, they are asked to write a short response paper (no more than 5 pages) inspired by workshop readings and discussion, to be submitted by 14th June. Readings will be sent out to registered participants a few weeks ahead of the seminar.

## **Schedule**

### **Day 1**

**6<sup>th</sup> June, Sala del Capitolo (Badia Fiesolana)**

**13:30 – 14:00**

Welcome and introduction

**14:00 – 16:00**

Session 1: Setting the scene: responsible and responsive government revisited – with introductory presentation by J. Karremans (University of Salzburg): "Responsiveness versus responsibility: an abstract theoretical construct, or a hard reality of democratic politics?"

**16:00 – 16:30**

Coffee break

**16:30 – 18:00**

Session 2: Governing under uncertainty: contemporary dilemmas of policy-making

### **Day 2 – with invited speakers**

**7<sup>th</sup> June, Sala del Capitolo (Badia Fiesolana)**

**9:30 – 11:00**

Short introductions from invited speakers

**11:00 – 11:15**

Coffee break

**11:15 – 12:45**

Session 3: The nuts and bolts of policy-making: how government actors have coped with competing pressures?

**12:45 – 14:00**

Lunch break

**14:00 – 16:00**

Session 4: Realigning theory with empirics: researching the state, government and public policy today

## Readings

### Required

Mair, P. (2009). *Representative versus responsible government*. MPIfG Working Paper 09/8. <http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2010/2121/>

Skocpol, T. (1985). Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research [in:] P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge University Press, 3-37.

Hecló, H. (1974). Social Policy and Political Learning [in:] Idem, *Modern Social Politics in Britain and Sweden. From Relief to Income Maintenance*. Yale University Press. 268-322.

Hall, P.A. (1993). Policy Paradigms, Social Learning and the State: The case of Economic Policy in Britain. *Comparative Politics* 3 (April): 275-96.

Karremans, J. & Lefkofridi Z. (2018). Responsive versus responsible? Party democracy in times of crisis. *Party politics* (early view).

Caramani, D. (2017). Will vs. Reason: The Populist and Technocratic Forms of Political Representation and Their Critique to Party Government. *American Political Science Review* (111), 1, 54-67.

Steinmo, S. (2013). Governing as an Engineering Problem: The Political Economy of Swedish Success [in:] (eds.) W. Streeck & A. Schaefer, *Politics in the Age of Austerity*. Polity. 84-107.

## Further

### *On responsibility vs responsiveness dilemma*

Bardi, L., Bartolini S., and A. H. Trechsel. (2014). Responsive and Responsible? The Role of Parties in Twenty-First Century Politics. *West European Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 235–252.

Karremas, J. & K. Damhuis. (2018). The changing face of responsibility: A cross-time comparison of French social democratic governments. *Party politics* (early view), <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1354068818761197>.

Laffan, B. (2014). Testing Times: The Growing Primacy of Responsibility in the Euro Area. *West European Politics*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 270–287.

### *Other*

Brazys, S., & A. Regan. (2017). The politics of capitalist diversity in Europe: Explaining Ireland's divergent recovery from the Euro crisis. *Perspectives on Politics*, 15(2), 411-427.

Culpepper, P. D. (2014). The political economy of unmediated democracy: Italian austerity under Mario Monti. *West European Politics*, 37(6), 1264-1281.

Pierre, J. & B. Guy Peters. (2005). *Governing Complex Societies. Trajectories and Scenarios*. Palgrave MacMillan. Chapters 7 & 8. 117-140.

Poguntke, T. & P. Webb. (2018). Presidentialization, Personalization and Populism. The Hollowing out of Party Government [in:] (eds.) W. P. Cross, R. S. Katz and Scott Pruyssers, *The Personalization of Democratic Politics and the Challenge for Political Parties*. ECPR Press. 181-196.

Rinscheid, A. et al. (2019). Why do junctures become critical? Political discourse, agency, and joint belief shifts in comparative perspective. *Regulation & Governance* (early view).